

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8 stand rejected under § 102 on the basis of Hoshiya et al. (JP '514). Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to more clearly avoid this reference. Applicants traverse this rejection because the cited reference does not disclose (or suggest) a magnetic head having an MR film and a flux guide formed so as to overlap with the MR film, as in amended claims 1 and 8.

According to the examiner, Hoshiya et al. discloses that, when a vertical bias film 37 is disposed in contiguity to end parts of a magneto-resistance effect film 10 and a flux guide 11 in track width direction 61, magnetic domain control can be performed on the magneto-resistance effect film 10 and the flux guide 11, and hence noise is suppressed.

In Hoshiya et al., the flux guide 11 is disposed, not at a position facing a recording medium, but at the back of the magneto-resistance effect film 10 away from the recording medium, as shown in Figs. 1, 3, etc. By contrast, in the present invention, a flux guide 8 is disposed at a position facing a recording medium (i.e., is formed on the side of the MR film 10 near to a magnetic recording medium in the height direction SH (page 9, lines 21-23). However, claim 6 of Hoshiya et al. cites a flux guide disposed at the position facing the recording medium.

Still, however, in Fig. 6 of Hoshiya et al., which is set forth as the only embodiment of claim 6, the flux guide 11 and the magneto-resistance effect film 10 are disposed in the same plane. By contrast, in the present invention, the MR film

(magnetoresistance film) 10 is stacked on the flux guide 8 (i.e., the MR film 10 is formed so as to overlap a part of each of the under flux guide 8 and the upper flux guide 9 (page 12, lines 18-23), as clearly shown in Fig. 4B. For this reason, claims 1-6 and 8 are allowable.

Claim 3 is also allowable because it recites a flux guide that is formed as a part of the MR film. Fig. 8 of Hoshiya et al. shows an example of a structure in which the flux guide 11 is not used. Also, the specification of Hoshiya et al. includes no description of the flux guide 11 in a paragraph describing Fig. 8. Thus, the structure shown in Fig. 8 of Hoshiya et al. is evidently different from the present invention, in which a part of the flux guide 8 is exposed to the recording medium. Hence, Hoshiya et al. do not disclose a flux guide formed as a part of the magnetoresistance film, unlike the present invention. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-6 and 8 is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 stand rejected under § 103 on the basis of Hoshiya et al. Applicants traverse this rejection for the reasons given with respect to independent claim 1, as amended. Withdrawal is respectfully requested.

New claim 9 includes features of claim 3, which has been discussed. Allowance is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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